



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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Mayor's Press Office
(312) 744-3334
press@cityofchicago.org

**New Downtown Skate Park, Five Park Improvement
Projects Proposed for North and South Sides**

A new skate park downtown and five park improvement projects on the North and South sides would be made possible through financial measures introduced today to City Council by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

Grant Park Skate Park, 1100 S. Michigan Ave.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance in the amount of \$2.5 million would support the construction of a new skate and wheel park at the south end of Grant Park. The proposed three-acre, plaza-style park is planned for an area bounded by Roosevelt Road, Michigan Avenue, the 11th street pedestrian bridge, and the Illinois Central railroad tracks. The facility would feature an array of design elements for skaters, scooter riders and BMX enthusiasts. Other amenities would include a viewing platform and passive lawn space surrounding a performance area. The balance of the \$2.65 million project would be paid by the Chicago Park District. Approximately 1.9-acres of City-owned land located at 300 E. 11th St. would be sold to the Park District for \$1 to accommodate construction of the park.

Welles Park, 2333 W. Sunnyside Ave.

TIF assistance in the amount of \$1.3 million would support a new field house roof, pool filtration system, expanded playground and resurfaced tennis courts at Welles Park in Lincoln Square. Earlier upgrades at the 15-acre park resulted in ADA-access upgrades and other pool improvements. The park is named for Gideon Welles who served as Secretary of the Navy in President Abraham Lincoln's cabinet.

Williams-Davis Park, 4101 S. Lake Park Ave.

The Chicago Park District would be reimbursed with \$260,000 in Open Space Impact Fees for development costs associated with the construction of Williams-Davis Park in Oakland. Completed in 2008, the 2.85-acre park includes a playground and passive recreational space. The balance of the \$975,000 project was financed with 4th Ward Aldermanic funds. The park is named for Hattie Kay Williams and Izora Davis, who devoted their lives to improving the surrounding community.

Open Space Impact Fees are generated by new residential development projects to accommodate open space needs within the City's 77 formal community areas.

Park 557, 7211 N. Kedzie Ave.

Open Space Impact Fees in the amount of \$24,000 would finance the installation of new lighting

fixtures at Park 557 in West Ridge for the illumination of night time activities and safety purposes. The 1.6-acre linear park, acquired by the Chicago Park District in 2011, includes walking paths, benches and green space.

Buckthorn Playlot Park, 4345 S. Calumet Ave.

Buckthorn Park in Grand Boulevard would be expanded by the Chicago Park District onto 1.24 acres of adjacent, City-owned land through \$1.14 million in Open Space Impact Fees. The funding would be used to design and construct amenities within the expansion area, which is planned to increase the park's size by five times. The balance of the \$1.2 million project would be paid by the Chicago Park District.

Lorraine Dixon Park Playground, 8917-19 S. Dauphin Ave.

Ownership of Lorraine Dixon Park Playground in Burnside would be transferred at no cost from the City to the Chicago Park District, which would manage it as public open space. In 2013, City Council approved \$350,000 in TIF to support improvements to the .3-acre space, including playground upgrades, lighting and landscaping. The park is named for Lorraine L. Dixon, a former 8th Ward alderman who died in 2001 after a long battle with breast cancer.

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TIF Funds Proposed for Improvements to Three West Side Schools

Upgrades to three West Side schools would be funded through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) measures introduced to City Council today by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

Spencer Elementary Technology Academy, 214 N. Lavergne Ave.

Austin's Spencer Academy would receive \$700,000 in TIF for the construction of two playgrounds, a basketball court and security lighting. The funds would be applied to planning, design and construction costs.

George W. Tilton Elementary School, 223 N. Keeler St.

West Garfield Park's Tilton School would receive \$500,000 in TIF for the construction of a new playground, artificial turf field, basketball court and security lighting.

Genevieve Melody STEM School, 3937 W. Wilcox St.

West Garfield Park's Genevieve Elementary School would receive \$1.5 million in TIF for the construction of media classroom and science and computer labs.

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Proposal Would Renew Small Business Improvement Fund in Three TIF Districts

The City of Chicago's Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) would be renewed in three Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts under a plan proposed to City Council today by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

Under the proposal, \$1 million would be renewed for existing SBIF programs operating in the Clark/Montrose TIF district and \$500,000 would be allocated for the Lawrence/Broadway and Ravenswood TIF districts.

The SBIF program provides grants up to \$150,000 to help owners of commercial and industrial properties within specific TIF districts repair or remodel their facilities. Eligible improvements include roof and facade repairs, sign removal and replacement, tuck pointing, building systems upgrades, and other enhancements. The assistance is provided upon project completion and does not have to be repaid.

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Former Sun-Times Printing Plant Would be Sold for Redevelopment as Data Center

A deed restriction between the City of Chicago and the owners of the former Sun-Times printing plant on the Lower West Side would be formally terminated to allow for its redevelopment as a data center under a proposal introduced to City Council by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

The termination of the restriction would enable the sale of the 317,000-square-foot facility at 2800 S. Ashland Ave. to Quality Technology Services (QTS). The company is proposing to convert the property into a multi-tenant data storage facility and build out the 29-acre site in phases with a 10-year investment of more than \$440 million.

The agreement, established through a City-owned land sale in 1999, required the facility to operate as a printing plant and employ 400 people. In 2009, the Sun-Times was sold to a group of Chicago-based investors and subsequently filed for bankruptcy. The new owners outsourced printing operations and the facility closed in 2011.

Started in 2003, QTS is one of the country's largest data center providers to high tech, financial, health care and government customers. The project would create up to 80 jobs.

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Landmark Designation Proposed for Former Anshe Sholom Synagogue Building

The former Anshe Shalom Synagogue building in North Lawndale would be designated an official City of Chicago landmark proposed today to City Council by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

The Classical-Revival style building on the northwest corner of Independence Boulevard and Polk Street features yellow brick and gray limestone along with Ionic columns that support a triangular rooftop pediment with tablets in Hebrew script. The interior possesses a finely-detailed sanctuary with brilliantly-colored stain glass windows and a large decorative-metal chandelier.

Designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Newhouse and Bernham, the building is a surviving example of several large-scale buildings built for Jewish institutions along Independence and Douglas boulevards during the 1910s and 1920s. Completed in 1926, the building was used by the

Anshe Sholom congregation until 1960, when it became the home of the Independence Boulevard Seventh Day Adventist Church.

The designation was recommended by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks on May 1, 2014.

North Lawndale was Chicago's most prominent Jewish community in the early 20th century, housing approximately one quarter of the City's Jewish population, mostly with Eastern European roots.

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University of Illinois to Continue to Use City Facility for Health Services

Mayor Rahm Emanuel has introduced an ordinance before City Council which would authorize the execution of an intergovernmental agreement with the University of Illinois. The intergovernmental agreement would govern the University of Illinois' continued access to a portion of space within the City-owned building located at 641 West 63rd Street. In partnership with the Department of Public Health, the University of Illinois will continue to provide cost effective primary care services to residents.

The 641 West 63rd Street property is the City's Englewood Neighborhood Health Clinic. Under the terms of the intergovernmental agreement, the University of Illinois will continue to use a portion of the 1st floor as clinical space. Since 2012, the University of Illinois has provided low-cost medical services to the public from this location.

"The University of Illinois' public health clinic is an essential resource for our community," said Alderman Willie B. Cochran, 20th Ward. "I am pleased Mayor Emanuel and the City have reached an agreement with the University so residents will continue to have access to these important medical services."

The proposed intergovernmental agreement allows the University of Illinois to use approximately 6,800 square feet of the space at 641 West 63rd Street through December 31, 2019. The City will not incur any additional operating costs for the site and the University of Illinois will reimburse the City for a prorated share of the operating costs.

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City to Renew North-Pulaski Branch Library Lease

Mayor Rahm Emanuel has introduced an ordinance which would authorize the execution of a lease governing the City's continued use of property located at 4300 West North Avenue. If approved by City Council, the City would continue to use the facility as the North-Pulaski Branch of the Chicago Public Library.

The North-Pulaski Branch of the Chicago Public Library provides library residents to residents of Hermosa and West Humboldt Park. The lease authorizes the City to continue to use approximately 6,243 square feet of building space. The owner is responsible for all building maintenance and will

provide certain upgrades to the site. The lease runs through December 31, 2020 but may be terminated by the City any time after June 30, 2015.

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